

RECOGNITION OF THE ONE HUNDREDTH BIRTHDAY OF JOHN MAGNOTTE

HON. DAVID E. BONIOR

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 22, 1999

Mr. BONIOR. Mr. Speaker, today I rise to recognize the 100 years of John Magnotte's life. John was born on September 22, 1899, in Detroit Michigan. Today John lives in the beautiful community of St. Clair Shores where he settled in the 1950's.

John married Dorothy Fraquelle in 1927, and raised three children, two sons and a daughter, while working for General Motors for 30 years. Though he has been a widower for the last 10 years, Mr. Magnotte is today surrounded by five generations of children, grandchildren, great grandchildren and even great-great grandchildren.

Mr. Magnotte is still very active in senior groups today, especially the St. Clair Shores Senior Cruisers Club. He is often found playing cards and socializing with the Cruisers, as well as the other senior groups in the area. He is always surrounded by friends and family and takes great pride in showing off the roses in his yard.

Besides his long life, we should recognize the experiences that John has acquired in his 100 years. He has lived through the administration of 18 different U.S. Presidents and the creation of five U.S. States. John went from the days of horse and buggy travel to witness space travel on television. Many of us can only dream of 100 years worth of visions and sights, a 100 years worth of character, a hundred years worth of emotions. John Magnotte's life is fit for framing, and should be cherished as a national treasure. I invite all of you to join me in honoring a true historian of the American Dream and wish John Magnotte a very happy one hundredth birthday.

IN HONOR OF REVEREND ALAN DAVIS

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 22, 1999

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the passing of Reverend Alan Davis, an activist who fought in the interests of justice for the poor and the oppressed without counting the costs. Reverend Alan Davis dedicated his life to helping the underprivileged.

Reverend Davis spent more than 23 years serving as a pastor at St. Phillip's Christian Church on E. 30th St. near one of the city's poorest housing projects. He led the church community in providing emergency food supplies and tutoring for area families. During this time he was also the executive director of the City Club where he brought in diverse philosophers and speakers from around the world to discuss issues important to the club. As City Club executive director, and as pastor at St. Phillip's, Reverend Davis devoted much of his time to the Volgograd Forum, a free speech forum similar to the City Club in Volgograd, Russia.

As a veteran of World War II and serving in the signal corps, Reverend Davis dem-

onstrated his commitment to both God and country. From 1953 to 1961, Reverend Davis served at North Royalton Methodist Church and then moved on to Aldersgate Methodist Church in Warrensville until 1968. Since then he spent 23 years serving St. Phillip's Church in Cleveland.

His commitment also extended to serving society and defending the civil rights of all Americans. As a social activist he was associated with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and affiliated with numerous programs to feed and house the poor. Reverend Davis soon went on to Yale University where he graduated with a bachelor's degree and then a graduate's degree from Yale Divinity School in 1953.

My fellow colleagues, join me in recognizing the passing of Reverend Alan Davis, a man who consistently and without pause adhered to the principles and values of God at the price of self-interest. Let us aspire in our own efforts to show such a commitment and passion to truth.

COMMEMORATING THE INDEPENDENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA

HON. JAMES E. ROGAN

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 22, 1999

Mr. ROGAN. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the people of Armenia celebrated the eighth anniversary of their republic—honoring a national referendum in support of a free and democratic Republic of Armenia. Less than 1 month ago, I had the honor and the privilege of visiting this proud nation and would like to share with my colleagues what I learned about this nation whose culture and tradition dates back some three millennia.

Perhaps the most inspirational lesson I brought back concerns a terrible experience endured not only by the Armenian people, but by the world—the atrocities committed at the hands of the Ottoman Turks in the first decades of this century. Despite a cultural and political annihilation—indeed a genocide—the Armenian people have flourished as a defining culture in the Caucasus, in the United States, and on the world stage.

This resilience is evident in the Republic's rise from former captive nation under the Soviet empire state to independent democracy. As I learned on my recent trip, the Armenian people—in the United States and Armenia—have united behind the cause of a prosperous community and a productive nation. Today, Armenia is leading the region in development of infrastructure, technology and education.

As we celebrate this independence, I reflect on my meeting with the President of Armenia, Robert Kocharian. Through his efforts and those of his Azerbaijani colleague, Heidar Aliiev, the release of Armenian prisoners of war recently was secured. This is just one example of their work to end decades of bitter feuding in the region. President Kocharian also has guided his nation into a new era of education reform, of artistic rejuvenation and of economic development.

Mr. Speaker, our Nation is built upon a foundation of freedom, democracy, and independence. The Republic of Armenia, I am proud to report, follows this same tradition.

The Armenian people have proven that the triumph of the human spirit—despite decades of war, of genocide, and of oppression—can not stifle the will of a people to make their world a better place to live. I am honored to represent one of the largest populations of ethnic Armenians outside Armenia, and I am deeply grateful for the opportunity to have visited their homeland.

As we move toward a new century, and look back on the successes of our past, I would ask my colleagues to join me in saluting the remarkable achievements in the Republic of Armenia. To the Armenian people we send our respect and admiration on the occasion of your nation's eighth anniversary of independence.

BAPTIST CHURCH TARGETED BY AZERBAIJAN AUTHORITIES

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 22, 1999

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, as Chairman of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, I rise today to highlight a disturbing incident involving governmental harassment of religious believers in Azerbaijan. We have received reports of religious liberty violations perpetrated by governmental authorities. As a participating State of the OSCE, Azerbaijan has committed to insuring the freedom of individuals to profess and practice their religion. These recent governmental actions are a clear violation of Azerbaijan's OSCE commitment to the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief.

On September 5th, government officials in Baku forced their way into a legally-registered church, Baku Baptist Church, and arrested sixty members of the religious group. The pastors of the church as well as a dozen foreigners were among those arrested and interrogated. The arrested Azeri religious believers were detained and asked to sign a statement affirming that they had attended an "illegal meeting" and promising not to attend the religious meetings in the future. Ultimately, two leaders of the church were sentenced to 15 days in prison on charges relating to resisting police. Likewise, then other foreign members of the religious group were charged with "engaging in religious propaganda" and "propagating against the Muslim faith," in violation of an Azeri law that forbids such activity. On September 8th, all ten foreigners were deported and more deportations are likely.

These events are alarming, Mr. Speaker. While there had been reports of governmental harassment in the past, especially of unregistered religious minority groups, these current events are especially problematic because the target of these actions was a legally registered religious group.

Mr. Speaker, these actions are in direct violation to Azerbaijan's OSCE commitments, including section 16 of the 1989 Vienna Concluding Document, which explicitly delineates the wide scope of activities protected, including the right to establish and maintain places of worship and granting them status under law to both profess and practice their faith. In the 1990 Copenhagen Concluding Document Article 9.1, Azerbaijan has reaffirmed "that everyone will have the right to freedom of expression, including the right to communication.